# CCP Collapse Advantage Core

## Affirmative

### 1AC — Economy Internal Link

#### [Insert Chinese Economy Stem]

#### And, economic growth is key to overall CCP stability – *most valued* source of legitimacy.

Lam 13 - Jon-Jon Lam, Investment Analyst at Yale Investments Office and Editor-in-Chief of the Yale Economic Review, 2013 (“Performance Legitimacy: An Unstable Model for Sustaining Power”, The Politic, January 10, 2013, Available Online at <http://thepolitic.org/performance-legitimacy-an-unstable-model-for-sustaining-power/>, Accessed June 30, 2016, KC)

Since the 1980s, China has relied on “performance legitimacy,” a model for sustaining power that entails consistently accomplishing concrete goals to justify its rule.[1] These goals include economic growth, social stability, governing competence, and accountability.[2] Performance legitimacy is fundamentally different from “ideological legitimacy,” a model for maintaining power that is based on a common ideology. Although one could argue that performance legitimacy itself is an ideology, for all intents and purposes of this article, ideology and ideological legitimacy will refer to the body of ideas and ideals that reflect the collective social needs and aspirations of the people. Similarly, “moral legitimacy” is a regime legitimation approach grounded in shared ethics. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will have to complement its performance legitimacy with moral and ideological legitimacy if it is to sustain its power into the future. Though the past 30 years suggest otherwise, performance legitimacy is inherently a flawed model for retaining power because consistently delivering on concrete goals is unsustainable. Moreover, in the absence of moral or ideological justifications of rule, performance legitimacy is insufficient for maintaining power.

It is important to first address the origins of performance legitimacy. According to Yuchao Zhu, Professor of Political Science at the University of Regina, the CCP derived its original justification of power from two sources: the Chinese citizenry’s consent to revolutionary dialogue and Marxist ideology.[3] However, after Mao’s rule, these two sources of legitimacy faltered, and the CCP adopted a new regime legitimation approach based on performance.[4] To this day, the CCP’s main goal is not to regain an original justification of rule but to retain its legitimacy.[5] Therefore, the CCP must convince its people that its governmental action is sufficient, appropriate, and beneficial.[6] Western scholars, such as Zhu, use performance legitimacy to explain regime legitimation. However, from a conventional Western perspective, a government that relies solely on performance legitimacy and lacks civil liberties, universal elections, or political participation does not have political legitimacy.[7] Thus, performance legitimacy is a concept unique to China and other Eastern countries.

Surely, the CCP’s hold on power for the past three decades suggests that performance legitimacy is a workable model for justifying rule. However, China’s economic growth of the past 30 years was unprecedented in magnitude and duration, as the country averaged 10% growth annually.[8] Thus, the effectiveness of China’s performance legitimacy model was perhaps augmented in ways that normal economic growth would not make possible. Therefore, looking into a future in which China expects high, but more ordinary growth rates, performance legitimacy will inherently be a less effective method of justifying power. Moreover, accustomed to rapid economic progress, Chinese citizens will take growth for granted, reducing the effectiveness of performance legitimacy and elevating the importance of alternative justifications of power.

Performance-based legitimation is also unstable because the government must reach ever-higher benchmarks of performance to maintain its rule. Improvements in official accountability, a key tenet of performance legitimacy, can actually make future legitimacy harder to achieve.[9] Specifically, by increasing transparency and accountability, the Chinese government makes its mistakes more noticeable to the Chinese citizenry. Thus, China’s achievements are increasingly at risk of being overshadowed by even minor missteps.[10] In this way, as transparency is increased, China’s achievements produce “diminishing marginal gains” to its performance legitimacy. In other words, over time it becomes increasingly difficult to sustain performance legitimacy. The Chinese government must constantly re-legitimate its rule, as achievements and setbacks keep its performance legitimacy in fluctuation. Therefore, sole reliance on performance legitimacy is unstable because it progressively becomes a less effective method of maintaining power.

#### [Insert Impact Scenario]

### 1AC — Laundry List Conflicts

#### CCP collapse decimates the stability of the international order – laundry list of conflicts.

Perkinson 12 — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

Should the CCP undergo some sort of dramatic transformation – whether that be significant reform or complete collapse, as some radical China scholars predict2 – the implications for international and US national security are vast. Not only does China and the stability of the CCP play a significant role in the maintenance of peace in the East Asian region, but China is also relied upon by many members of the international community for foreign direct investment, economic stability and trade. China plays a key role in maintaining stability on the Korean Peninsula as one of North Korea’s only allies, and it is argued that instability within the Chinese government could also lead to instability in the already sensitive military and political situation across the Taiwan Strait. For the United States, the effect of instability within the CCP would be widespread and dramatic. As the United States’ largest holder of US treasury securities, instability or collapse of the CCP could threaten the stability of the already volatile economic situation in the US. In addition, China is the largest trading partner of a number of countries, including the US, and the US is reliant upon its market of inexpensive goods to feed demand within the US.

It is with this in mind that China scholars within the United States and around the world should be studying this phenomenon, because the potential for reform, instability or even collapse of the CCP is of critical importance to the stability of the international order as a whole. For the United States specifically, the potential - or lack thereof - for reform of the CCP should dictate its foreign policy toward China. If the body of knowledge on the stability of the Chinese government reveals that the Chinese market is not a stable one, it is in the best interests of the United States to look for investors and trade markets elsewhere to lessen its serious dependence on China for its economic stability, particularly in a time of such uncertain economic conditions within the US.

### 1AC — South China Sea Impact

#### CCP instability prompts Chinese lash-out to tap into nationalist tendencies, specifically in the South China Sea

Cole 14 — J. Michael Cole, editor and chief of www.thinking-taiwan.com, a web site operated by the Thinking Taiwan Foundation—an educational foundation, former analyst at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, 2014 (“Where Would Beijing Use External Distractions?” *The Diplomat*, July 10th, Available Online at <http://thediplomat.com/2014/07/where-would-beijing-use-external-distractions/>, Accessed 6-30-16)

Throughout history, embattled governments have often resorted to external distractions to tap into a restive population’s nationalist sentiment and thereby release, or redirect, pressures that otherwise could have been turned against those in power. Authoritarian regimes in particular, which deny their citizens the right to punish the authorities through retributive democracy — that is, elections — have used this device to ensure their survival during periods of domestic upheaval or financial crisis. Would the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), whose legitimacy is so contingent on social stability and economic growth, go down the same path if it felt that its hold on power were threatened by domestic instability?

Building on the premise that the many contradictions that are inherent to the extraordinarily complex Chinese experiment, and rampant corruption that undermines stability, will eventually catch up with the CCP, we can legitimately ask how, and where, Beijing could manufacture external crises with opponents against whom nationalist fervor, a major characteristic of contemporary China, can be channeled. In past decades, the CCP has on several occasions tapped into public outrage to distract a disgruntled population, often by encouraging (and when necessary containing) protests against external opponents, namely Japan and the United States.

While serving as a convenient outlet, domestic protests, even when they turned violent (e.g., attacks on Japanese manufacturers), were about as far as the CCP would allow. This self-imposed restraint, which was prevalent during the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, was a function both of China’s focus on building its economy (contingent on stable relations with its neighbors) and perceived military weakness. Since then, China has established itself as the world’s second-largest economy and now deploys, thanks to more than a decade of double-digit defense budget growth, a first-rate modern military.

Those impressive achievements have, however, fueled Chinese nationalism, which has increasingly approached the dangerous zone of hubris. For many, China is now a rightful regional hegemon demanding respect, which if denied can — and should — be met with threats, if not the application of force. While it might be tempting to attribute China’s recent assertiveness in the South and East China Seas to the emergence of Xi Jinping, Xi alone cannot make all the decisions; nationalism is a component that cannot be dissociated from this new phase in Chinese expressions of its power. As then-Chinese foreign minister Yang Jiechi is said to have told his counterparts at a tense regional forum in Hanoi in 2010, “There is one basic difference among us. China is a big state and you are smaller countries.”

This newfound assertiveness within its backyard thus makes it more feasible that, in times of serious trouble at home, the Chinese leadership could seek to deflect potentially destabilizing anger by exploiting some external distraction. Doing so is always a calculated risk, and sometimes the gambit fails, as Slobodan Milosevic learned the hard way when he tapped into the furies of nationalism to appease mounting public discontent with his bungled economic policies. For an external distraction to achieve its objective (that is, taking attention away from domestic issues by redirecting anger at an outside actor), it must not result in failure or military defeat. In other words, except for the most extreme circumstances, such as the imminent collapse of a regime, the decision to externalize a domestic crisis is a rational one: adventurism must be certain to achieve success, which in turn will translate into political gains for the embattled regime. Risk-taking is therefore proportional to the seriousness of the destabilizing forces within. Rule No. 1 for External Distractions: The greater the domestic instability, the more risks a regime will be willing to take, given that the scope and, above all, the symbolism of the victory in an external scenario must also be greater.

With this in mind, we can then ask which external distraction scenarios would Beijing be the most likely to turn to should domestic disturbances compel it to do so. That is not to say that anything like this will happen anytime soon. It is nevertheless not unreasonable to imagine such a possibility. The intensifying crackdown on critics of the CCP, the detention of lawyers, journalists and activists, unrest in Xinjiang, random acts of terrorism, accrued censorship — all point to growing instability. What follows is a very succinct (and by no means exhaustive) list of disputes, in descending order of likelihood, which Beijing could use for external distraction.

1. South China Sea

The South China Sea, an area where China is embroiled in several territorial disputes with smaller claimants, is ripe for exploitation as an external distraction. Nationalist sentiment, along with the sense that the entire body of water is part of China’s indivisible territory and therefore a “core interest,” are sufficient enough to foster a will to fight should some “incident,” timed to counter unrest back home, force China to react. Barring a U.S. intervention, which for the time being seems unlikely, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has both the numerical and qualitative advantage against any would be opponent or combination thereof. The Philippines and Vietnam, two countries which have skirmished with China in recent years, are the likeliest candidates for external distractions, as the costs of a brief conflict would be low and the likelihood of military success fairly high. For a quick popularity boost and low-risk distraction, these opponents would best serve Beijing’s interests.

#### SCS conflict causes huge death tolls.

Wittner ‘11

(Lawrence S. Wittner, Emeritus Professor of History at the State University of New York/Albany, Wittner is the author of eight books, the editor or co-editor of another four, and the author of over 250 published articles and book reviews. From 1984 to 1987, he edited Peace & Change, a journal of peace research., 11/28/2011, "Is a Nuclear War With China Possible?", [www.huntingtonnews.net/14446](http://www.huntingtonnews.net/14446))

While nuclear weapons exist, there remains a danger that they will be used. After all, for centuries national conflicts have led to wars, with nations employing their deadliest weapons. The current deterioration of U.S. relations with China might end up providing us with yet another example of this phenomenon. The gathering tension between the United States and China is clear enough. Disturbed by China’s growing economic and military strength, the U.S. government recently challenged China’s claims in the South China Sea, increased the U.S. military presence in Australia, and deepened U.S. military ties with other nations in the Pacific region. According to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the United States was “asserting our own position as a Pacific power.” But need this lead to nuclear war? Not necessarily. And yet, there are signs that it could. After all, both the United States and China possess large numbers of nuclear weapons. The U.S. government threatened to attack China with nuclear weapons during the Korean War and, later, during the conflict over the future of China’s offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu. In the midst of the latter confrontation, President Dwight Eisenhower declared publicly, and chillingly, that U.S. nuclear weapons would “be used just exactly as you would use a bullet or anything else.” Of course, China didn’t have nuclear weapons then. Now that it does, perhaps the behavior of national leaders will be more temperate. But the loose nuclear threats of U.S. and Soviet government officials during the Cold War, when both nations had vast nuclear arsenals, should convince us that, even as the military ante is raised, nuclear saber-rattling persists. Some pundits argue that nuclear weapons prevent wars between nuclear-armed nations; and, admittedly, there haven’t been very many—at least not yet. But the Kargil War of 1999, between nuclear-armed India and nuclear-armed Pakistan, should convince us that such wars can occur. Indeed, in that case, the conflict almost slipped into a nuclear war. Pakistan’s foreign secretary threatened that, if the war escalated, his country felt free to use “any weapon” in its arsenal. During the conflict, Pakistan did move nuclear weapons toward its border, while India, it is claimed, readied its own nuclear missiles for an attack on Pakistan. At the least, though, don’t nuclear weapons deter a nuclear attack? Do they? Obviously, NATO leaders didn’t feel deterred, for, throughout the Cold War, NATO’s strategy was to respond to a Soviet conventional military attack on Western Europe by launching a Western nuclear attack on the nuclear-armed Soviet Union. Furthermore, if U.S. government officials really believed that nuclear deterrence worked, they would not have resorted to championing “Star Wars” and its modern variant, national missile defense. Why are these vastly expensive—and probably unworkable—military defense systems needed if other nuclear powers are deterred from attacking by U.S. nuclear might? Of course, the bottom line for those Americans convinced that nuclear weapons safeguard them from a Chinese nuclear attack might be that the U.S. nuclear arsenal is far greater than its Chinese counterpart. Today, it is estimated that the U.S. government possesses over five thousand nuclear warheads, while the Chinese government has a total inventory of roughly three hundred. Moreover, only about forty of these Chinese nuclear weapons can reach the United States. Surely the United States would “win” any nuclear war with China. But what would that “victory” entail? A nuclear attack by China would immediately slaughter at least 10 million Americans in a great storm of blast and fire, while leaving many more dying horribly of sickness and radiation poisoning. The Chinese death toll in a nuclear war would be far higher. Both nations would be reduced to smoldering, radioactive wastelands. Also, radioactive debris sent aloft by the nuclear explosions would blot out the sun and bring on a “nuclear winter” around the globe—destroying agriculture, creating worldwide famine, and generating chaos and destruction.

### 1AC — Taiwan Impact

#### CCP instability causes a Taiwan war – goes global.

Perkinson 12 — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

However, a period of significant reform within the CCP could lend itself to instability on the Taiwan Strait. There is no guarantee that pro-independence factions within Taiwan would not take advantage of the CCP and PLA’s distraction with their own transformation to take dramatic, perhaps militaristic, steps toward independence. For example, during Taiwan’s most recent election cycle, the pro-independence candidate Tsai Ing-wen, though she lost the election, garnered enough support to make the government in mainland China nervous about her rise in support.166 The potential destabilization of the Taiwan Strait could spell disaster for the entire region, as other countries and allies could be pulled into a protracted conflict between the two regions.

### 1AC — East China Sea Impact

#### CCP instability causes a conflict over the Senkaku islands – goes global.

Perkinson 12 — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

A third region that has a deep interest in China’s political stability is their neighbor Japan. Not only is Japan deeply integrated economically into the Chinese trade system, it also has a number of ongoing territorial disputes with the country. For example, in January 2007, total trade between China and Japan was $18.1 million. That amount spiked to $344.9 million in December, 2011 (an 1808.1% increase)167, a clear indicator that China and Japan are growing their trade dependence at an astounding rate. In addition, Japan and China continue to disagree over the status of some hotly contested territories, including the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. Not only do both countries have a territorial claim to the islands, but the area contains vast amounts of oil and natural gas resources that both countries want to develop. For example, it is estimated that the Japanese side of the disputed East China Sea area contains up to 500 million kiloliters of crude oil volume.168 As China is the world’s second-largest consumer of oil and Japan third, with Chinese demand for oil expected to rise 14% by 2025, these oil deposits are of crucial national security interest to both countries.169 Tension in the region has been rising as China has continued to press closer to the median line that Japan has drawn around the islands, at one point coming as close as five kilometers from the line.170 The consistency of the Chinese message on the status of these disputed territories, though tense and combative for the Japanese, have at least lent a level of predictability to China’s stance and actions. However, should the CCP undergo a period of instability and reform, and if their message or actions were to change regarding the status of these islands, it could cause a significant conflict over these territories between China and Japan, and could severely destabilize an already weakened Japanese economy. Much like the potential destabilization of the Taiwan Strait, the destabilization of the East China Sea region could draw the countries’ regional neighbors and international partners into a protracted conflict between the two nations.

### 1AC — India War

#### CCP collapse causes China-India war

Cohen 2 — Stephen Philip Cohen, Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Studies Program at the Brookings Institution, 2002 (“Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War in South Asia: An Unknowable Future,” Brookings Institution, May, available online at <http://www.brookings.edu/research/speeches/2002/05/southasia-cohen>, accessed 6/30/16) JL

Political Stability in India, China and Pakistan India, China and Pakistan have each undergone periods of profound political instability in the past. India underwent an “emergency” in the 1970s that turned it into a virtual dictatorship; China experienced a prolonged internal upheaval in the form of the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s; Pakistan has oscillated between military rule (sometimes with martial law), and weak civilian governments for its entire history. Further, Pakistan was physically divided in 1971, and all three face several separatist threats, sometimes encouraged by each other. As a variable, political instability affects their nuclear futures in two ways. First, there is the question of control over nuclear weapons—a state riven by political conflict may have problems in storing and safeguarding, let alone using, its nuclear weapons and fissile material stocks. Second, there is the question of perception: does political instability in one state raise the prospect in the minds of the leadership of its adversary that a moment of great opportunity or danger is approaching? While in the short run it seems improbable that instability in India could be of a magnitude that would affect the nuclear balance, it is not unimaginable. It would be especially likely in the aftermath of armed conflict or serious economic crisis. India is metastable, but a chronically weak center, or disorder in states where there were significant nuclear assets, might raise questions concerning India’s ability to protect its nuclear assets and its vulnerability to nuclear blackmail. A similar argument may be made with respect to China. China is a country that has had its share of upheavals in the past. While there is no expectation today of renewed internal turmoil, it is important to remember that closed authoritarian societies are subject Cohen/South Asia Nuclear Futures -13- to deep crisis in moments of sudden change. The breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia, and the turmoil that has ravaged many members of the former communist bloc are examples of what could happen to China. A severe economic crisis, rebellions in Tibet and Xinjiang, a reborn democracy movement and a party torn by factions could be the ingredients of an unstable situation. A vulnerable Chinese leadership determined to bolster its shaky position by an aggressive policy toward India or the United States or both might become involved in a major crisis with India, perhaps engage in nuclear saber-rattling. That would encourage India to adopt a stronger nuclear posture, possibly with American assistance.

### 1AC — India Economy

#### CCP instability decks India’s economy.

Perkinson 12 — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

In addition, any political instability within the CCP would spell disaster for the Indian economy, which is becoming increasingly reliant on China as a trading partner. Partially as a counterweight to the two nations’ conflict, India and China have been dramatically growing their bilateral trade in the last three decades. Though this has served to promote peace in the region and between the two giants in particular, it has also made India increasingly reliant on China’s continued stability for its economic prosperity. For example, in 1990, trade between India and China had bottomed out at near $0. However, this figure shot up drastically between 2000 and 2008 to around $35 billion174, with no sign of leveling off. It is obvious from these statistics that the two nations continue to build their trade dependency and that India’s economy is deeply intertwined with China’s. The consistency of China’s message on the contested border area, as well as the fairly stable environment surrounding the Tibetan dispute, lend at least some predictability to the disagreement between the two nations. However, if China were to undergo a period of political instability, this series of predictable messages and actions from China on these disagreements could change, and cause aggression from either side, destabilizing the region and India’ economy in the process.

#### India is key to the global economy.

Chotai 16 — Suresh Chotai, graduate of Arts from Mumbai University, 2016 ("Blogs: India Set to Play Key Role in Global Economy," *Jewellery Net Asia*, May 9th, Available Online at http://www.jewellerynetasia.com/en-us/editorial/Blogs/555/6792/india-set-to-play-key-role-in-global-economy)

India is set to become the world’s youngest country with 64% of its population in the working age group by the end of 2020. With the population in the West, Japan and even China aging, demand for Indian workforce would pick up to its peak. This potential offers India and its growing economy an exceptional edge that global economists believe could add a significant 2% to the country’s GDP growth rate. India’s Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi has called upon the country’s universities and educational institutions to produce more trained professionals to enable them avail the job opportunities that would be created globally as well as in domestic sectors. Accordingly, every industrial sector and educational institution has geared up to train huge workforce here to meet the global and domestic opportunities.

Gems & Jewellery Skill Council of India (GJSCI) recently launched the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL Program) as the first step to uplift the artisans in the country’s Gem & Jewellery Sector (G&J). GJSCI has been persistently contributing towards Mr. Modi’s ‘Skill India’ program and has been taking several measures and steps to cultivate the 3.5 million skilled yet uncertified labour-forces of the G&J industry.

Identified as one of the priority sectors by the Government, India’s G&J industry contributes 6% to 7% of the country’s GDP. It is estimated to grow by 100% in terms of manpower requirements and will have job openings for another 3.5 million candidates by 2022. The RPL program will help candidates to identify their inherited skills and get certified for the same which will equip them to get better and more stable jobs and avail of entrepreneurship opportunities.

On the other hand, the Indian Institute of Gems & Jewellery (IIGJ)-Mumbai has recently tied up with Welingkar Institute of Management to offer three years’ Jewellery Design & Manufacturing Techniques programme. The course will begin from academic year 2016-17. IIGJ thus has become the first institute in the country to offer a complete graduate course on Gems and Jewellery including Operations Management for emerging jewellery professionals and entrepreneurs.

Mr. Vasant Mehta, Chairman of IIGJ says, “Training our students in professional management techniques is very important part of the process of making India the top jewellery manufacturer in the world. It will arm the industry with additional skills to take this leap. Our institute has trained 8,000 students during past 11 years and it has been following up with Mumbai University to grant jewellery degree course accreditation.”

IIGJ has been playing instrumental role in creating and nurturing the future of India’s G&J industry. The gems and jewellery industry has been growing rapidly over the years due to domestic and global demands and the sector is on the cusp of shortage of skilled staff. Most of the jewellers in the industry are of multiple generations. With such professional management courses the IIGJ Aims to bring new talent in the industry as well as to groom the existing talent.

Every third individual in an Indian city today is a youth. During next seven years, the median person in India will be 29 years of age. This would make India the youngest country in world. So India is all set to play a key role in development of the global economy and to experience a dynamic transformation because the population burden of the past would turn into a demographic bonus.

### 1AC — Korean War

#### CCP instability results in a second Korean war, which goes nuclear.

Perkinson 12 — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

First, the stability of the Korean Peninsula rests in large part on the stability of China’s political system. Both North and South Korea have vested interests in the continued stability of the CCP for their own security. As is generally well-known in the international community, North Korea relies in large part on China superseding international trade sanctions not only for luxury goods, but for basic needs such as food and oil. For example, the United States led the charge and enacted its first set of sanctions against North Korea over two decades ago in response to the existence of fissile material on the Korean Peninsula and its risk for proliferation.152 Over time, these sanctions have been expanded upon and have attracted the support and participation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Specifically, these sanctions have included blocked property and interests in property, banned transactions involving North Korean vessels and bans on reception of imports originating in North Korea.153 Though these sanctions have not encouraged the North Korean regime to change its policies (and in some cases have made them more militant), they have unfortunately had a devastating effect on the North Korean people, including depravation of access to critical resources such as medication, food and water and energy supplies such as oil.154 In addition, due to a succession of floods and droughts and the refusal of the international community to intervene in a country violating international laws, pervasive malnutrition has led to “up to one million excess deaths since the 1990’s.155 In order to maintain stability on the Peninsula and prevent the North Koreans from becoming desperate, China continues to export both luxury goods and basic commodities into North Korea. For example, in 2005, China accounted for 53% of North Korea’s international commerce. However, this has increased rapidly since sanctions have become stricter and have increased pressure in the country. In 2009, China accounted for 79% in North Korea’s international commerce and as of 2010 was up to 83% of North Korea’s $4.2 billion in trade156 in order to ease the effect of the existing international sanctions.

In addition, China has been a facilitator of the Six-Party Talks, the primary international diplomatic forum for handling tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Countries involved in the Six-Party Talks include China, North Korea, Russia, the United States, South Korea and Japan, and the first round of talks was initiated and hosted by China, taking place in Beijing in August 2003.157 During the talks, China served as a moderator between the US and North Korea during tense times of debate, also insisting on certain thresholds of success before members could leave the talks, such as the drafting of diplomatic agreements158. Though the talks have remained in an on-and-off pattern over the last decade, China still makes consistent efforts to bring North Korea back to the diplomatic negotiations over their nuclear regime.159

South Korea’s dependence on China’s continued stability is twofold. Not only does South Korea rely on China’s continued deterrence of North Korean aggression both through diplomacy and satisfaction of their trade needs, but they also rely on China as a trade partner. For example, on November 23, 2010, North Korea fired dozens of missiles onto the South’s Yeonpyeong Island, killing two South Korean soldiers, significantly escalating tension on the Peninsula as South Korea threatened military retaliation for the attack.160 In response, China focused their energy on deterring an armed response by the South Koreans, which could have potentially led to protracted civil war between the two countries. Though the international community has expressed deep disagreement with China’s soft-line approach toward North Korea, it appears their understanding, ‘big-brother’ style of handling North Korean aggression toward South Korea has at least prevented a violent, protracted conflict, though not necessarily further North Korean acts of aggression.161 Not only does South Korea rely on the continued intervention of the Chinese in North-South relations, but they have a deep economic integration and dependence on Chinese trade. For example, in 2010, South Korea was China’s fourth-largest trading partner, exchanging goods of $207.2 billion, up 32.6% over 2009.162 In other words, both North and South Korea rely heavily on China not only for their continued economic prosperity, but also for the survival of their people and territorial security. Should the Chinese government undergo a period of reform and instability great enough to interrupt these benefits to the Korean Peninsula, the international system may be faced with a serious nuclear and conventional military conflict between North and South Korea.

### 1AC — EU-China Relations

#### CCP instability hinders EU-China cooperation – the impact is terrorism, disease, failed states, and energy security.

Perkinson 12 — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

The second concern that the EU has with potential political instability in China is their cooperation alongside China in international organizations. In her book The European Union and China, May-Britt Stumbaum discusses why China’s continued cooperation, which is contingent on their political stability, is critical to the continued stability of EU foreign policy and security of the international community. Stumbaum writes, “Having been the source of global pandemics such as SARS and the Avian Flu, China’s willingness to cooperate with international institutions and other states will be crucial in order to cope with these new threats. In general, given the enormous scope of 21st century challenges, as diverse as terrorism, failing states and the securing of energy, China’s cooperation will be crucial for the required concerted responses and financial and physical contributions”.178 However, if China’s government encounters a period of instability that interrupted its ability to participate actively in international institutions, other nations such as the EU member states attempting to address the problems listed by Dr. Stumbaum would find themselves without a primary financial and physical contributor to the struggle for international security and peace.

### 1AC — US–China Relations

#### CCP instability prevents effective US-China relations.

Perkinson 12 — Jessica, Faculty of the School of International Service of American University in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in International Affairs; reviewed by: Quansheng Zhao, Professor of international relations and Chair of Asian Studies Program Research Council at American University, and John C. King, Assistant Professor School of International Service, 2012 (“The Potential for Instability in the PRC: How the Doomsday Theory Misses the Mark,” American University, April 19th, Available Online at http://aladinrc.wrlc.org/bitstream/handle/1961/10330/Perkinson\_american\_0008N\_10238display.pdf?sequence=1)

Though the potential consequences of Chinese political instability for the international community are grave and vast, there are few regions of the world whose cooperation with China is more important than that of the United States. The hegemonic leader of the international system and of all major international institutions for more than the last two decades, the stability and continuation of the US’s growing cooperation with China are more critical to the stability of the entire global order than any other relationship. Because the United States continues to grow both its economic and security commitment not only with China, but with the entire East Asian region, it is increasingly critical that China’s government maintain a stable and secure internal environment. Various aspects of US national security that could be affected by Chinese political instability include its military commitment to East Asian countries such as South Korea, Taiwan and Japan, its interests in the denuclearization of Iran, and the stability of its already volatile economy.

#### [Insert Impacts from Relations Advantage]

### 1AC — Diversionary War

#### CCP collapse hurts the global economy and sparks Chinese aggression

Bandow 15 — Doug Bandow, Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute, J.D. from Stanford University, 2015 (“Can Economic Dynamism and Political Stability Survive China’s Battle against Freedom?” *Forbes*, July 24th, Available Online at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/dougbandow/2015/07/24/can-economic-dynamism-and-political-stability-survive-chinas-battle-against-freedom/#1c7f34111bab>, Accessed 6-29-16)

An unstable China is in no one’s interest. Certainly not for the Chinese people, rulers or ruled. And not for the rest of us. A poorer PRC means a poorer world: China is a major supplier and increasingly important source of global demand. Moreover, a politically unstable Beijing would have unpredictable effects on its neighbors: the PRC could use military confrontation in an attempt to shift popular attention from domestic economic problems.

### They Say: “Economy Not Key to CCP Stability”

#### Slow growth causes CCP collapse

Pei 15 – Minxin, Minxin Pei is an expert on governance in the People's Republic of China, U.S.-Asia relations, and democratization in developing nations, Shanghai International Studies University, Harvard University, University of Pittsburgh(“The American Interest” Nov 12 2015, <http://www.the-american-interest.com/2015/11/12/the-twilight-of-communist-party-rule-in-china/>) RMT

If elite unity is the glue of the post-Tiananmen system, economic performance, as is commonly acknowledged, is the most important source of popular legitimacy for the ruling party. A quarter century of high growth has bought the CPC a long period of relative social stability and provided it with enormous resources to strengthen its repressive capabilities and buy off new social elites and the urban growing middle-class. However, as the “Chinese economic miracle” is now ending, the second pillar of the post-Tiananmen system is about to collapse as well.

Ostensibly, the present sharp Chinese economic slowdown may seem like a natural deceleration after decades of torrid growth. But a closer look at the causes of “the great fall of China” suggests that structural and institutional obstacles, not cyclical ones, are at work and that China is entering a phase of low to moderate economic growth that could imperil the legitimacy of the CPC. Press coverage of Beijing’s recent economic troubles has focused largely on the more visible and dramatic symptoms of the Chinese economic malaise, such as the collapse of a stock market bubble and surprise currency devaluation. However, China’s growth deceleration has much deeper roots.

Structurally, China’s rapid growth in the post-Tiananmen era was driven principally by one-off favorable factors or events, and not by the purported superiority of an authoritarian state. Among these factors or events, the most important is the “demographic dividend”, which provided a seemingly endless supply of cheap and able-bodied young workers for China’s industrialization. Besides their low wages, young migrants from rural areas to urban centers can gain an instant and large increase in labor productivity simply by virtue of being paired with operating capital, without need for extensive educational preparation. Consequently, the mere redeployment of the country’s excess rural labor force to factories, shops, and construction sites in the cities can make the economy more productive. According to Chinese data, an urban worker’s productivity is four times higher than that of a rural peasant. In the past three decades, about 270 million rural laborers (excluding their families) have moved to cities and now account for 70 percent of the urban work force. Some economists estimate that about 20 percent of China’s GDP growth in the 1980s and 1990s came from the rural-urban labor relocation.5 But because China’s population is aging rapidly and the mass migration from rural to urban areas has peaked, this one-off favorable structural factor cannot be replicated.

Another one-off positive shock that powered China’s growth since Tiananmen was its entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. In the 1990s China’s export growth averaged 15.4 percent per annum, thanks to its integration into the global economy. But after its entry into the WTO, China achieved annual growth in exports of 21.7 percent over the period 2002–08. Export-driven growth began to slow after 2011. Between 2012 and 2014, export growth averaged 7.1 percent, a third of the growth in the prior decade. In the first seven months of 2015, exports contracted around 1 percent, the development that probably prompted Beijing to devalue its currency.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of China’s long-term economic outlook is the diminishing return from its investment-driven growth strategy. As a developing country with relatively low stocks of capital, China initially benefited immensely from a sustained rise in its investment rate. In the 1980s, China ploughed an average of 35.8 percent of GDP into factories, infrastructure, and housing. The rate rose to 42.8 percent on average in the 2000s and has reached 47.3 percent since 2010. Such massive increase in investment, accounting for more half of China’s GDP growth, has been the primary engine of economic expansion in the past two and half decades.

However, investment-driven growth in the Chinese context has had three negative consequences. One is the diminishing returns on investments, because each incremental increase in output requires more investment, as measured by capital output ratio (the amount of investment needed to produce an additional yuan of GDP). In the 1990s, Chinas capital output ratio was 3.79. In the 2000s, it rose to 4.38. This trend—growth requiring ever-rising investment—is simply not sustainable. China is already investing nearly half of its GDP, an extraordinary number made possible by state control of infrastructure development. The extent of overcapacity and misallocation of capital are equally extraordinary.

Another harm inflicted on the economy is that investment squeezes out household consumption (36 percent of GDP in 2013, compared with 60 percent in India), causing a massive structural imbalance and making sustainable growth impossible. That sustainable growth must come from moving away from export-led modalities to domestic market growth, but it cannot set roots with household consumption so artificially low.

The final cost of China’s investment-led growth is that much of it has been financed by credit and ploughed into industrial sectors already plagued with excess capacity. With debt-to-GDP ratio exceeding 280 percent of GDP today (compared with 121 percent in 2000), risks of a full-blown financial crisis have risen because the largest borrowers—local governments, state-owned enterprises, and real estate developers—have poor repayment capacity due to a narrow tax base (local governments), overcapacity and poor profitability (state-owned enterprises), and a deflating property bubble (real estate developers).

#### Successful economic growth is specifically key to offset other threats to CCP stability.

Zhu 11 - Yuchao Zhu, Professor in the Department of Politics and International Studies at University of Regina, PhD from Queen's University, 2011 (“'Performance Legitimacy' and China's Political Adaptation Strategy”, Journal of Chinese Political Science, June 1, 2011, Available on *EBSCO host*, Accessed on June 30, 2016, KC)

Nevertheless, mainly due to economic prosperity in recent years, there is considerable support for the Chinese government, especially from the business and bureaucratic elite. But the question remains: is this the result of good performance or other variables? Bruce Gilley rightly questions “whether high legitimacy in China was a result of ignorance about performance or a result of some rational argument about the validity of that performance related to particular circumstances (Gilley, 2008, p.75).” As discussed above, a more accountable government and a more transparent governance may earn credit for the regime. However, if China’s governance policy is evaluated through an examination of the overall conduct of state institutions, the result is very mixed. The economic growth in the last 20 years is certainly very impressive; but the social consensus supporting market oriented economic reform, and which is based on a shared belief that economic growth will benefit all people eventually, is also eroding, due to the fact of growing social inequalities, rampant corruption, widespread human rights abuse, and failed social welfare programs in education and health care. This may unfortunately offset the government’s successful economic performance. Moreover, political institution building is under critical scrutiny. On the one hand, increasing transparency and accountability is underway; government administration is also more institutionalized, regulated, and disciplined. On the other hand, however, state institutions also become clumsy, bureaucratic, coercive, and corrupt in many areas; therefore the already assertive society becomes more demanding, uncooperative, and even defiant. The interactions between state institutions and society are intensified, reflecting the pluralistic social interests and demands which may be inconsistent with government interests and development agenda. For the state, the consent of the governed is more and more difficult to retain, even with obvious achievements; this is mainly because the regime’s wrong doing or mismanagement are even more noticeable to society and the people. Thus, good economic performance may produce legitimacy but any failure in governance is closely monitored and noticed; and the operational cost to maintain good performance and to correct bad performance is also very high, therefore legitimacy is very fragile and hard to sustain. The most difficult thing, then, is that governmental performance produced legitimacy is tricky to maintain through existing institutions. Minor mistakes could damage the major achievements. Major policy blunders could heavily ~~retard~~ hurt the government’s image and then decrease its legitimacy. The government finds it increasingly difficult to fulfill all the concentrated or discursive social demands. As normal governance practice may not serve society’s needs well, innovative policies are required to promote social and economic reform through state actions. In this sense, a government’s performance based legitimacy is always “unfinished business,” which continues to face constant challenges, and reflects the dynamic interactions between state and society.

#### Strong economic performances are critical to legitimacy of the CPP

**Wallace 15** --Jeremy Wallace is an associate professor of government at Cornell University. He is the host of the ChinaLab podcast and the author of Cities and Stability: Urbanization, Redistribution, and Regime Survival in China, August 26th (“The political implications of China’s stock market crisis”, available online at <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/08/26/the-political-implications-of-chinas-stock-market-crisis/>, accessed 6/29/16, HDA)

The Chinese stock market has captured headlines over the past month for two reasons: its dramatic collapse and the efforts of the Chinese government to prop it up. The former isn’t much of a problem, while the latter is. Pessimists looking at this five-year chart of the Shanghai Composite Index will focus on the cliff dive that it has taken over the past three months. But optimists might take some comfort from the 52 week return — over 35 percent — which would make even the most aggressive hedgefunder or university endowment manager happy. The ultimate importance of this run-up and decline in paper value is what it signals about China’s changing economy and politics. On the economic side, it’s unclear how much the collapse will bleed over into the real economy. Many of those losing out borrowed to put money into the market when it was hitting its peak and will suffer serious losses. But the most important effects of this episode are political. Authoritarian regimes like China’s do not persist on repression and violence alone. They craft messages that induce “quasi-voluntary compliance” out of their citizens. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) came to power through a revolution fueled by peasants excited by the prospect of taking the land that they tilled from the landlords that owned it; an excitement generated by Communist Party rhetoric. Obviously, the CCP has changed its tune on capitalism. Yet, it still maintains a large propaganda and censorship apparatus that controls the information environment. Huang Haifeng’s recent article in Comparative Politics, “Propaganda as Signaling,” points to one of the reasons that the party continues to send out propaganda messages: It signals the government’s strength, even if no one believes in the rhetoric. That is, propaganda can serve a purpose even without any successful “indoctrination.” A government might have incentive to spend the resources to flood the airwaves with propaganda as a way to separate itself from a weak government that couldn’t spare the resources on propaganda. Using survey responses of Chinese students who are forced to take propaganda-filled political education classes, the paper finds that: Chinese college students with more exposure to state propaganda in the form of ideological and political education do not have a more positive view of China’s government and political system, but they are more likely to believe that the regime is strong in maintaining political order and social stability, and less willing to participate in political dissent. While the signaling value of propaganda that Huang highlights is surely there, that doesn’t mean that no one believes the messages of the Chinese government. The propaganda apparatus does continue to push out messages of an ever more convoluted socialism with Chinese characteristics. But the main message that the Chinese government sends to its citizens and the world is that it is competent. Officials ordering companies and employees to buy their own stocks to prop them up only to have their market collapse further undermines this narrative. The Chinese government has for decades relied on trumpeting statistics to send positive signals. Economic growth statistics, kilometers of high-speed railway lines, tons of trade shipments, trillions of foreign currency reserves and subsidized housing units all point in one direction: Growth! Success! The implicit message is that the Chinese Communist Party-led government must be competent to produce such growth. The internal governance of the party-state was also determined by the numbers, with local officials promotions based on these metrics. Even if there are questions about the veracity of these statistics (especially of gross domestic product, as I’ve written about previously), the droning on and on of metric after metric that has improved, jumped, sky-rocketed or increased creates a sense in which this government must know what it is doing. Thus, the rank incompetence of the government’s efforts to prop up its equities markets was damaging to that image. As Paul Krugman put it in a column entitled “China’s Naked Emperors” (which the New York Times helpfully translated into Chinese): This is the context in which you need to understand the strange goings-on in China’s stock market. In and of itself, the price of Chinese equities shouldn’t matter all that much. But the authorities have chosen to put their credibility on the line by trying to control that market — and are in the process of demonstrating that, China’s remarkable success over the past 25 years notwithstanding, the nation’s rulers have no idea what they’re doing.

#### Slow growth causes CCP collapse

Symonds 15 – The World Socialist Web Site, Published by the ICFI (Peter Symonds 25 August 2015 “Economic turmoil heightens infighting in Chinese regime” <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/08/25/fact-a25.html>) RMT

While no obvious moves have been made against Xi, the economic turmoil in China is clearly weakening his position. Two recent editorials in the state-owned media hit back openly at criticism coming from party elders without naming anyone. The CCP’s central organ, the People’s Daily, bluntly warned retired leaders on August 10 to “cool off” and accused “some leading cadres” of hampering the government and “undermining party cohesion.” A second editorial on the CCTV website last week described resistance to the government’s agenda of pro-market reform as “beyond what could have been imagined.”

More fundamentally, the economic slowdown and share market falls in China are undermining the legitimacy of the regime itself. Having all but abandoned its socialist posturing, the legitimacy of the CCP has increasingly rested on the maintenance of high levels of economic growth as well as the whipping up of Chinese nationalism. The Chinese bureaucracy as a whole is deeply fearful of social unrest, above all of the working class, and has long regarded 8 percent growth as necessary to prevent rising unemployment. Currently the government is struggling to achieve the current target of 7 percent. The policy adviser told the New York Times that concerns over social unrest prompted the CCP Politburo last month to approve the 2 percent currency devaluation and other economic measures.

With the eruption of the 2008 global financial crisis, Chinese exports plunged, leading to the loss of 23 million jobs. The government only restored growth through a massive stimulus package and expansion of credit, which far from boosting productive activity, fuelled speculation in property and more recently, in shares. Both of these speculative bubbles are collapsing, most spectacularly with plummeting share prices. The Shanghai Composite Index has fallen by about 38 percent since its peak in June.

The CCP has encouraged investment in shares and property as a means of seeking to establish a base of support among sections of the middle class. Substantial financial losses among these social layers will only add to the political instability.

Beijing-based commentator Chen Jieren told the New York Times: “Everyone understands that the economy is the biggest pillar of the Chinese government’s legitimacy to government and to win over popular sentiment. If the economy falters, the political power of the Chinese Communist Party will be confronted with more real challenges, social stability in China will be endangered tremendously, and Xi Jinping’s administration will suffer even more criticism.”

The close attention being paid to Chinese politics by the New York Times and other media indicates concern in Washington. The aim of the Obama administration’s “pivot to Asia” against China has been to ensure continued US hegemony in Asia and the subordination of the Chinese regime to American interests. However, the prospect of political instability in Beijing, particularly if it triggers a movement of the Chinese working class, is the last thing that the ruling classes, both in the US and China, want.

#### High value economic sectors are key to avert CCP collapse

Hung et al 15

HO-FUNG HUNG, associate professor of sociology at Johns Hopkins University ARTHUR R. KROEBER, managing director of GaveKal Dragonomics, an independent global economic research firm, HOWARD W. FRENCH, associate professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, he is working on a book about the future of Chinese power, SUISHENG ZHAO, Professor and Director of the Center for China-U.S. Cooperation at Josef Korbel School of International Studies, University of Denver, 2015 – (Foreign Policy, 3/13/15, “When Will China’s Government Collapse?” <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/13/china_communist_party_collapse_downfall/> date accessed 6-29-16 EAKJ)

I defer to others on the specifics of China’s known challenges, but a few points seem fairly obvious. The early, and one might say easy, phase of China’s takeoff is over.. That period consisted in large measure of stopping doing stupid things and inflicting damage on oneself. Moving forward now from here becomes exponentially more difficult. This means finding a way to sustain relatively high growth rates, when almost everything points to a natural, secular slowdown. It means coping with environmental challenges on a scale never seen before. It means dealing with the emergence of a middle class, and everything that political science suggests about the difficulties that this poses for authoritarian regimes. It means finding a way through the middle-income trap. It means restraining corruption that is, if anything, even worse, meaning more systemic, than commonly recognized. It means coping with the accelerating balancing of nervous neighbors. It means coping with issues of ethnic and regional tensions and stark inequality. It means drastic and mostly unfavorable changes in demography. And it means doing all of these things, and facing any number of other serious challenges that space doesn’t allow one to detail here, without the benefit of a coherent or appealing ideology other than nationalism and, tentatively, budding personality cult-style leadership. We don’t know how this is going to turn out. For every success one can point to involving China, it is easy to point to at least one stark and serious problem, or potential failing. I don’t share Shambaugh’s confidence in predicting the demise of the party, but it does not strike this reader as a reckless prediction. It should not surprise us, and neither should its opposite, China’s continued relative success. Such is the degree of uncertainty we must all live with.Yes, the CCP regime is in crisis. But it has muddled through one crisis after another, including the catastrophes of the chaotic, decade-long Cultural Revolution and the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, by tackling its symptoms. It is too difficult to predict the arrival of the cracking up moment now. This current crisis comes after more than three decades of market-oriented economic reform under one-party rule, which has produced a corruptive brand of state capitalism in which power and money ally. The government officials and senior managers in state-owned enterprises (SOEs) have formed strong and exclusive interest groups to pursue economic gains. China ranks among the countries of the highest income inequality in the world at a time when China has dismantled its social welfare state, leaving hundreds of millions of citizens without any or adequate provision of healthcare, unemployment insurance, and a variety of other social services. Meanwhile, China has become one of the world’s most polluted countries. The crisis has worsened as China’s economic growth is slowing. As the worsening economic, social, and environmental problems cause deep discontent across society and lead many people to take to the streets in protest, China has entered a period of deepening social tensions. Apparently, Beijing is frightened and has relied more and more on coercive forces. The cracking up moment could come when economic growth has significantly slowed, and Beijing is unable to sustain the regime’s legitimacy with its economic performance.

#### Economic Collapse causes CCP instability

Pei 13 - Margot Pritzker ’72 professor of government at Claremont McKenna College and a non-resident senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States.(Minxin Pei February 13, 2013 “5 Ways China Could Become a Democracy” <http://thediplomat.com/2013/02/5-ways-china-could-become-a-democracy/?allpages=yes>) RMT

“Financial meltdown” – our fourth scenario – can initiate a democratic transition in China in the same way the East Asian financial crisis in 1997-98 led to the collapse of Suharto in Indonesia. The Chinese bank-based financial system shares many characteristics with the Suharto-era Indonesian banking system: politicization, cronyism, corruption, poor regulation, and weak risk management. It is a well-known fact today that the Chinese financial system has accumulated huge non-performing loans and may be technically insolvent if these loans are recognized. In addition, off-balance sheet activities through the shadow-banking system have mushroomed in recent years, adding more risks to financial stability. As China’s capacity to maintain capital control erodes because of the proliferation of methods to move money in and out of China, the probability of a financial meltdown increases further. To make matters worse, premature capital account liberalization by China could facilitate capital flight in times of a systemic financial crisis. Should China’s financial sector suffer a meltdown, the economy would grind to a halt and social unrest could become uncontrollable. If the security forces fail to restore order and the military refuse to bail out the party, the party could lose power amid chaos. The probability of a collapse induced by a financial meltdown alone is relatively low. But even if the party should survive the immediate aftermath of a financial meltdown, the economic toll exacted on China will most likely damage its economic performance to such an extent as to generate knock-on effects that eventually delegitimize the party’s authority.

### They Say: “Ideology Controls Reaction”

#### Economic growth is key — the Chinese people see through propaganda

**Zhou 15** -- Steven Zhou is a journalist based in Toronto. He is a regular contributor to The American Conservative, Muftah and Ricochet media, among other outlets. He is also a columnist and an associate editor at The Islamic Monthly. September 21st (“Chinese stock market rout may lead to political instability”, available online at <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/9/chinese-stock-market-rout-may-lead-to-political-instability.html>, accessed 6/29/16, HDA)

This direct connection between China’s politics and its economy underscores the fragility of the CCP’s undisputed control. For decades, the party has presented itself as an all-encompassing force that can insulate the country from international forces that will, in its eyes, hamper the Chinese people’s road to affluence. In order to reduce risks for those rich enough to participate in it, the CCP have built a cocoon of Western-style financial markets. However, the success and failure of this state-led capitalist scheme affects the stability of China’s political situation. The current turmoil in Chinese stock prices may go a long way in determining the country’s future and a potential for reform. In the interim, the CCP is likely to continue its aggressive damage control (for its own image as much as for the stock markets and the wider economy), but further restrictions on who can buy and sell stocks may force investors to care less for the party’s stature. These investors and China’s middle class citizens rely on good financial information, especially in times of instability. But the government has largely coopted the state media and financial sector to portray Chinese markets as risk-averse and conducive for foreign investment. In the long run, the party’s obsession with managing its own image and its constant obfuscation of the country’s financial health through the state media is likely to force more and more investors to pull out. People are already turning away from mainstream Chinese outlets such as the People’s Daily and toward social media apps such as WeChat, which features myriad freelance finance experts claiming to possess useful information on how to get through a crisis. Still, there are limited alternatives. Chinese social media network, Weibo, is less censored than most of the country’s newspapers and magazines but it is also not completely insulated from tampering. (Search engines such as Google and social media sites such as Facebook are blocked in China.) The CCP’s desperate half-measures are becoming increasingly obvious. For example, it has forced prominent journalists such as Wang Xiaolu to apologize on national television for “spreading rumors.” A Bloomberg report last month suggested Chinese officials held Li Yifei, China chief for the London-based Man Group hedge fund, for questioning regarding the steep stock market plunges. Li has denied the rumors and blamed her sudden disappearance on an industry meeting and Taoist retreat. The CCP’s aggressive interventions in the economy will continue to undermine the people’s trust in the party’s ability to lead the country toward greater wealth creation and protect it in a volatile global economy. The CCP’s promise relies heavily on propaganda, but the Chinese peoples’ growing realization of its hollow narrative is almost certain to set off enormous political shifts.

### They Say: “No Taiwan War”

#### The PLA attacks Taiwan when stability begins to fade—even if we don’t win collapse we just need to win China perceives self weakness

Chang 1 --- Gordon G. Chang, trustee of Cornell University and popular China expert, 2001 (“The Coming Collapse of China,” Random House New York, not available online, pp. 263-4, ES)

“But Kinmen and Matsu would just be appetizers tor the PLA. Like a wolf, the Chinese Communist Party will only be satisfied when it has the sheep in its stomach," said exile Wei Jingsheng, referring to Taiwan. The famous dissident knows that conquering outlying islands will not be enough, especially for military leaders who think they can swallow the entire enchilada. Senior Mainland generals have boasted that they can take the main island of Taiwan in one day. That statement is nonsense, so we assume they don't actually believe what they say. Yet grave miscalcu- lations and undiluted sentiments launch armies. When military leaders lose their sense of reality and political masters have their own selfish agendas, a nation can choose the wrong path. That's true especially if the survival of the Party is at stake. In the spring of 2000, Jiang Zemin commissioned briefings on the collapse of Communist and authoritarian regimes around the world. He undoubt- edly learned the theory that the Second World War deferred the demise of the Soviet Union by dampening corruption and reinforcing the notion of self-sacrifice. Perhaps Beijing talks war these days because China's leaders share the notion that minor hostilities, even a minor excursion such as China's forray into Vietnam in 1979. are generally beneficial for the People’s Republic. Or perhaps we are hearing those bellicose words because Beijing thinks that it is now or never. Taiwan is drifting away, and someday it will be too late to bring it back into the fold. Some think that if China has to fight, it should do so while there are still serving generals who have seen combat. In a few years' time all experienced officers will have retired, in- cluding Defense Minister Chi Haotian and Central Military Commission Vice Chairman Zhang Wannian, both of whom are scheduled to leave their posts in 2002. And the PLA argues that the time for an invasion is now, before Taiwan can rearm with the next generation of American weapons. So the stars are aligned toward war. Twice Jiang Zemin has threat- ened conflict, and twice he has backed down. No government, especially one in a country' where "face" is critical, can afford to do that a third time. Beijing's leaders think that war will be popular, so it won't take much to start the next crisis. Maybe it will be a mistake or perhaps a de- liberate act, but the next crisis looks as if it will be the one that leads to conflict. And if there are hostilities, they will be the last for the People's Republic. We need a war, which we will lose," said a Chinese journalist in May 2000. "That will destroy faith in the present dynasty." If there is war, the Mainland will lose. And the losses will be high. For the Communist leaders, losing ten thousand or one hundred thousand soldiers is noth- ing," said one Taipei resident recently. "They consider the life of a Chi- nese worthless." The Party didn't even blink at its horrendous Korean War casualties and probably will not care about those in the future even if they are high. Beijing's leaders will just talk about glory and say that the human sacrifice was worth it. But that's not how our Wang Chuanning will see it if his Jason is needlessly lost in a misconceived military adven- ture. Wang and grieving relatives may not immediately take to the streets, but the populace will lose its faith that the Communist Party can lead. It will be then that the Chinese demand the right to govern them- selves.

### They Say “No Diversionary War”

#### CCP instability results in diversionary wars and domestic violence.

Auslin 15 — Michael Auslin, writes a column on Japan and U.S.-Asian relations for the *Wall Street Journal*, 2015 ("The Risks of a Falling China," *Wall Street Journal*, July 13th, Available Online at http://www.wsj.com/articles/the-risks-of-a-falling-china-1436806217)

Behind all these dangers lies one common factor: an unreconstructed Communist Party determined to hold on to absolute power. Unable to stop the stock slide, and facing growing opposition to its assertiveness abroad, the Party runs its own risk: being seen as dangerous, out of control, or incompetent, if not a combination of all three.

Domestic frustration with Mr. Xi’s heavy-handed suppression of dissent will easily find a new outlet in criticism of a government now creating more problems than it solves. That might augur an even greater crackdown at home, or possibly adventurism abroad to deflect attention away from failure.

### They Say: “No SCS Conflict”

#### China will instigate a violent conflict in the South China Sea

Lu 15 — Henry Lu, Williams College, 2015 ("‘Deeper’ Chinese Motivations in the South China Sea," *Fox & Hedgehog*, November 4th, Available Online at http://www.foxhedgehog.com/2015/11/deeper-chinese-motivations-in-the-south-china-sea/)

Academics suggest that China’s growing aggression is driven in part by considerations for domestic politics and in part by the need to assert greater power on the international stage. The first idea is that mounting economic challenges and corruption are encouraging the Chinese government to divert away domestic attention. This follows the “diversionary war” thesis, which suggests that a government facing domestic discontent resort to foreign aggression in order to unite the people and bolster its legitimacy. The second idea is that as China’s economy has grown, so too have its interests in asserting power. This follows from the “offensive realism” theory, which suggests that China’s economic miracle means it can now abandon former leader Deng Xiaoping’s axiom: “hide your strength, bide your time.”

How do these ways of thinking inform our analysis of the South China Sea? Since political interests are driving much of China’s foreign policy in the South China Sea, it would be useful to examine Chinese political trends in forecasting its future behavior. The single most significant change affecting Chinese politics today is economic, where growth is declining and debt is mounting. Chinese officials acknowledge that China’s export and debt-driven growth model is unsustainable and are attempting to rebalance the Chinese economy towards domestic consumption. The political repercussions of this economic transition almost certainly impact Chinese foreign policy in the South China Sea.

According to the diversionary war thesis, economic turmoil creates incentives for officials to channel domestic frustration into foreign aggression. This is particularly applicable to China because the Chinese government has a lot at stake when it comes to economic performance. After reforms in the late 1970s largely swept away Marxist principles, the Communist Party relied increasingly on China’s economic miracle for its legitimacy. Now that the era of unprecedented growth is waning, the Chinese government is inclined to promote nationalism and diversion through external means, and the South China Sea is an obvious target. The second, offensive realism approach leads to an opposite conclusion. Since China is entering a major and uncertain economic transition, it is reverting to an old strategy: “hide your strength, bide your time” while tinkering with the economy. The impact of China’s economic transition in the short-term therefore depends on a balance between two opposing tendencies.

## Negative

### No Collapse — 1st line

#### No collapse — the CCP is resilient and other factors outweigh

Chen 15 — Dingding Chen, Assistant Professor of Government and Public Administration at the University of Macau, Non-resident Fellow at the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin, Founding Director of the Intellisia Institute—an independent think-tank focusing on international affairs in China, PhD and M.A. in Political Science from the University of Chicago, 2015 (“Sorry, America: China Is NOT Going to Collapse,” *The National Interest*, March 10th, Available Online at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/sorry-america-china-not-going-collapse-12389?page=2>, Accessed 6-22-16)

Second, would a slowdown, or even a massive financial meltdown lead to widespread disruption in Chinese society? The answer actually depends on how the effects of the slowdown are distributed throughout society. As Confucius pointed out long ago, Chinese people tend to get riled up more about inequality than scarcity(患均不患寡), which is just as true today. Most ordinary Chinese hate a high level of inequality, especially if such inequality is a result of corruption rather than legitimate hard work. While a severe crisis would lead to a massive loss of jobs and lower incomes, if the U.S. economy survived the 2008 global financial crisis, there is no reason to believe the Chinese economy cannot overcome a similar one.

Third, even if a severe economic crisis hits China and causes greater social grievances, why does this mean that social unrest will automatically lead to an uprising against the regime? In other words,, this claim is premised on the belief that the Chinese government’s legitimacy relies solely on economic performance.

Unfortunately this assumption, though widely held among scholars, is no longer true. Economic growth is certainly important for most Chinese people, but education, the environment, corruption, and legal justice matter just as much as growth. As long as the Chinese government seriously tackles problems in those areas, support for the CCP will remain high. This explains why the Xi administration has initiated bold reforms in all these areas.

Finally, even if there is political unrest will it necessarily topple the regime? This depends on the balance of power between the government and the dissenters. Where is the political opposition in China today? Does the political opposition enjoy the widespread support of ordinary Chinese people? Is there any leader who might want to play the role of Gorbachev? None of these factors exist in China.

### No Collapse — Survey Results

#### CCP stability is not derived from economic growth — survey results confirm that this is overly reductive

Panda 15 — Ankit Panda, Editor of *The Diplomat*, 2015 (“Where Does the CCP's Legitimacy Come From? (Hint: It's Not Economic Performance),” *The Diplomat*, June 18th, Available Online at <http://thediplomat.com/2015/06/where-does-the-ccps-legitimacy-come-from-hint-its-not-economic-performance/>, Accessed 6-29-16)

There’s a pernicious and persistent piece of conventional wisdom in conversations about China’s political stability that is often presented as a truism: the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) legitimacy stems from its ability to deliver high economic growth; if economic growth disappears, so will its legitimacy; this in turn will lead to the beginning of the end of the CCP.

The a priori appeal is evident since the reason stands the test of common sense. After all, assuming a broad definition of “legitimacy,” it would make sense that keeping citizens happy through high economic growth would prevent social unrest or calls for a new form of government. How do you keep citizens happy? Well, you can expand the economic pie, ensuring that everyone gets a larger slice—more per capita GDP leads to more per capita happiness leads to less revolution and upheaval. For CCP elites, mass upheaval over economic outcomes is best avoided by keeping China’s year-on-year growth rates as high as possible.

New research challenges this conventional wisdom with evidence. A new Global Working Paper (PDF warning) from the Brookings Institution inverts the reasoning I outlined above. Measuring “legitimacy” is of course a tricky endeavor, so the paper instead measures well-being—roughly how happy citizens are—against China’s economic performance (the word “legitimacy” does not appear in the paper). The paper additionally looks at the prevalence of mental health disorders in China. The finding of interest, distilled in a Brookings blog post, is as follows:

We find that the standard determinants of well-being are the same for China as they are for most countries around the world. At the same time, China stands out in that unhappiness and reported mental health problems are highest among the cohorts who either have or are positioned to benefit from the transition and related growth—a clear progress paradox. These are urban residents, the more educated, those who work in the private sector, and those who report to have insufficient leisure time and rest.

The paper’s finding has already drawn intelligent commentary from a few commentators (political scientist Jay Ulfelder and blogger T. Greer have posted important reactions). The finding that well-being, particularly among Chinese economic “elites,” is decoupled—and even inversely correlated—with China’s overall economic growth would suggest that the CCP’s survival might be independent of China’s overall economic performance. Thus, the CCP thrives not because it makes Chinese elites happy, but despite Chinese elites’ unhappiness.

As Ulfelder summarizes:

These survey results contradict the “performance legitimacy” story that many observers use to explain how the Chinese Communist Party has managed to avoid significant revolutionary threats since 1989 (see here, for example). In that story, Chinese citizens choose not to demand political liberalization because they are satisfied with the government’s economic performance. In effect, they accept material gains in lieu of political voice.

The decline in overall well-being among elites does present a serious challenge to the conventional explanation of the CCP’s legitimacy. The authors of the Brookings report also highlight previous studies of well-being and life satisfaction in China that measured a large decline in happiness among “the lowest-income and least-educated segments of the population.” In previous studies, China’s “upper socioeconomic strata” exhibited a rise in happiness, somewhat confirming the conventional wisdom explanation. Additionally, the authors note numerous independent variables that affect happiness, including rural/urban status, internal migration status (urban households and migrant households report lower happiness levels than their rural, non-migrant counterparts).

Where does the CCP’s legitimacy come from then? As Greer notes, maybe looking at the per capita distribution of wealth in China has been the wrong measure all along—it’s unnecessarily reductive and dismissive of the opinions of actual Chinese people. Instead, Chinese people would attribute the legitimacy of the CCP to specific policy initiatives (i.e., fighting corruption, delivering justice to wrong-doers within the country’s power apparatus) as well as more diffuse, nation-level factors (i.e., the CCP’s “role in helping China, as a country and a nation, become wealthy, powerful, and respected on the international stage”).

The long-term survival of the CCP may be the most consequential question for China in the 21st century, both for external observers watching China’s rise and for internal stakeholders. It’s undoubtedly important thus to understand how Chinese citizens relate to their government and experience life as China continues to grow. Still, it’s best to update our beliefs on how the CCP sustains its political legitimacy when presented with new data. The often-repeated economic performance explanation of the CCP’s legitimacy is not only outmoded—it appears to have never really been based in reality.

### No Collapse — Empirics

#### Economic decline doesn’t cause collapse — empirics disprove

Xie 15 – Xie Tao, professor of political science at the School of English and International Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University. He holds a PhD in political science from Northwestern University Tao (March 20, 2015 “Why Do People Keep Predicting China's Collapse?” <http://thediplomat.com/2015/03/why-do-people-keep-predicting-chinas-collapse/>) RMT

Because many Western analysts (dating back at least to Seymour Martin Lipset) subscribe to the view that as long as political institutions are viewed as legitimate, a crisis in effectiveness (e.g., economic performance) does not pose fatal threat to a regime. Thus even in the darkest days of the Great Depression, according to this view, America’s democratic institutions remained unchallenged. By contrast, if a regime is already deficient in political legitimacy, a crisis of effectiveness (such as an economic slowdown, rising inequality, or rampant corruption) would only exacerbate the legitimacy crisis. China is widely believed to be a prominent case that fits into this line argument.

China might be facing a performance crisis, but whether it is also facing a legitimacy crisis is debatable. Beauty is in the eyes of beholder; so is legitimacy. If the Chinese party-state could survive the riotous years of the Cultural Revolution and the existential crisis of 1989, why couldn’t it manage to survival another crisis? In fact, a more important question for Western observers is why the Chinese Communist Party has managed to stay in power for so long and to produce an indisputably impressive record of economic development.

### No Collapse — Ideology

#### No collapse — the CCP can use ideology to control the impact of economic decline on legitimacy using propaganda

Zeng 16 — Jinghan Zeng, Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London, Associate Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University of Warwick, Ph.D. in Politics and International Studies from the University of Warwick, M.A. from the University of Pittsburg, 2016 (“The Chinese Communist Party’s Capacity to Rule,” Critical Studies of the Asia-Pacific, Published by Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN 978-1-349-57455-1, p. 71-73)

As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, there is no empirical evidence to prove that the CCP’s legitimacy solely relies on economic success. Arguably, there are two major problems in the relevant literature: the exclusion of ideological factors and the narrow focus of government performance.

The major problem with the socioeconomic performance approach lies in its exclusion of ideological factors, which leads to many problematic arguments and predictions. The performance legitimacy approach implies a problematic relationship between economy and politics (White, 1986). The argument – that legitimacy of the CCP primarily relies on economic performance – implies that economic crisis or the slowdown of economic growth would lead to some kinds of legitimacy crises or major disasters in China. This is also explicitly warned by many who argue that economic deterioration will unavoidably lead to political crisis (Krugman, 2013; Zhao, 2009). This kind of argument implies that economic factors are the independent or dominant variables, while political factors are subordinate or dependent variables. It is flawed to contend that the regime is helpless in an economic crisis. This book endorses White’s assertion (1986) on the primacy of politics – that proper political actions can fill the deficit in legitimacy created by economic difficulties.

As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, legitimacy directly comes from neither economic crisis nor economic growth per se (Gilley and Holbig, 2010). Ideological factors will transform economic performance into people’s subjective perceptions of economic performance, and regime legitimacy is based on “those perceptions” rather than on economic performance per se. As such, an economic crisis is not a direct threat to a regime – its impacts on political legitimacy depend on people’s perceptions of the crisis and the regime; thus, how the government frames this crisis is crucial (Gilley and Holbig, 2010). In other words, how political actors use ideological factors to frame people’s perceptions of the crisis (i.e., discourse) is key to deciding the impact of the crisis on legitimacy.

Proper political actions and effective crisis management will contribute to minimize legitimacy loss or even sometimes enhance legitimacy. As discussed below, there is much room to manipulate people’s dependency on the government and on its irreplaceable role during a crisis. This is especially true in China, where people’s dependency on the government is more obvious because of historical traditions (Tong, 2011). The CCP has abundant experience and the capability to market its authoritarian rule through information control and powerful propaganda campaigns. In the 2008 financial crisis, for example, the Chinese government actually won, rather than lost, legitimacy credits. The regime strategically manipulated this crisis as an opportunity to achieve its political purposes including the promotion of Scientific Outlook of Development (Holbig, 2011). The Chinese media highlighted China’s good performance in coping with the financial crisis domestically in contrast with the disaster that this crisis caused in other countries, and the official media also made efforts to project international recognition onto China’s crisis management. By using those propaganda strategies, the CCP successfully transformed its performance during this crisis into positive perceptions, thus legitimacy (Holbig, 2011).

### No Collapse — Party Adapts

#### CCP adaptability ensures stability and economic resiliency

Li 13 — Eric X. Li, venture capitalist in Shanghai, serves on the board of directors of China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) and is vice chairman of its publishing arm CEIBS Publishing Group, a Henry Crown Fellow of the Aspen Institute, 2013 (“The Life of the Party: The Post-Democratic Future Begins in China,” Foreign Affairs, February, available online at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2012-12-03/life-party>, accessed 6/30/16) JL

In November 2012, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) held its 18th National Congress, setting in motion a once-in-a-decade transfer of power to a new generation of leaders. As expected, Xi Jinping took over as general secretary and will become the president of the People's Republic this March. The turnover was a smooth and well-orchestrated demonstration by a confidently rising superpower. That didn't stop international media and even some Chinese intellectuals, however, from portraying it as a moment of crisis. In an issue that was published before the beginning of the congress, for example, The Economist quoted unnamed scholars at a recent conference as saying that China is "unstable at the grass roots, dejected at the middle strata and out of control at the top." To be sure, months before the handover, the scandal surrounding Bo Xilai, the former party boss of the Chongqing municipality, had shattered the CCP's long-held facade of unity, which had underwritten domestic political stability since the Tiananmen Square upheavals in 1989. To make matters worse, the Chinese economy, which had sustained double-digit GDP growth for two decades, slowed, decelerating for seven straight quarters. China's economic model of rapid industrialization, labor-intensive manufacturing, large-scale government investments in infrastructure, and export growth seemed to have nearly run its course. Some in China and the West have gone so far as to predict the demise of the one-party state, which they allege cannot survive if leading politicians stop delivering economic miracles.

Such pessimism, however, is misplaced. There is no doubt that daunting challenges await Xi. But those who suggest that the CCP will not be able to deal with them fundamentally misread China's politics and the resilience of its governing institutions. Beijing will be able to meet the country's ills with dynamism and resilience, thanks to the CCP's adaptability, system of meritocracy, and legitimacy with the Chinese people. In the next decade, China will continue to rise, not fade. The country's leaders will consolidate the one party model and, in the process, challenge the West's conventional wisdom about political development and the inevitable march toward electoral democracy. In the capital of the Middle Kingdom, the world might witness the birth of a post-democratic future.

### No Collapse — Nationalism

#### Nationalism is essential to CCP stability

Zeng 16 — Jinghan Zeng, Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London, Associate Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University of Warwick, Ph.D. in Politics and International Studies from the University of Warwick, M.A. from the University of Pittsburg, 2016 (“The Chinese Communist Party’s Capacity to Rule,” *Critical Studies of the Asia-Pacific,* Published by Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN 978-1-349-57455-1, p. 13)

In addition to government performance, nationalism is another frequently mentioned explanatory factor of regime legitimacy in China. The country’s increasingly assertive foreign policy has generated enormous academic and public interest in Chinese nationalism. Many argue that nationalism plays a crucial role in legitimizing the CCP’s rule (Breslin, 2009; Darr, 2011; Fang, 1997; Lam, 2003; Li, 2001b; Lieberthal, 2004: 334–335; Lin and Hu, 2003; Ostergaard, 2004; Saich, 2004; Shambaugh, 2001; Zheng, 2004). As Peter Gries (2005: 112) argues, “lacking the procedural legitimacy accorded to democratically elected governments and facing the collapse of communist ideology, the CCP is increasingly dependent upon its nationalist credentials to rule.” Thomas Christensen (1996) also argues, “[S]ince the Chinese Communist Party is no longer communist, it must be even more Chinese.” Nationalism is no doubt important to the CCP’s rule. However, there is no empirical evidence to prove that nationalism is a superior source of legitimacy in China (Chu, 2013).

Many also argue that Chinese nationalism has gradually become the ideological foundation of the CCP by replacing the communist ideals, which have been largely marginalized and weakened (Christensen, 1996; Gries and Rosen, 2004; He, 2007; Link, 2008; Metzger and Myers, 1998; Zhao, 1997; 1998; Zhong, 1996). For example, Duke University professor Liu Kang, argues:

‘The current Chinese communist government is more a product of nationalism than a product of ideology like Marxism and Communism’ ... today nationalism has probably ‘become the most powerful legitimating ideology.’ (Cited from: Bajoria, 2008)

### Reject their Authors/Empirically Denied

#### Prefer our evidence — their authors misinterpret reality

Chen 15 — Dingding Chen, Assistant Professor of Government and Public Administration at the University of Macau, Non-resident Fellow at the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin, Founding Director of the Intellisia Institute—an independent think-tank focusing on international affairs in China, PhD and M.A. in Political Science from the University of Chicago, 2015 (“Sorry, America: China Is NOT Going to Collapse,” *The National Interest*, March 10th, Available Online at <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/sorry-america-china-not-going-collapse-12389?page=2>, Accessed 6-22-16)

Then, why do so many Western analysts not see this reality? What do Shambaugh’s article and similar writings reflect about the mentality of some Western thinkers and analysts?

Perhaps implicit in such arguments is the collective worry or fear that China will continue to become stronger, more prosperous, and more assertive in international affairs. The West has not prepared for a possibility where it is no longer the dominant force in the world. After the Cold War, many Western democracies have adopted the triumphal “End of History” thesis.

However, now that a strong and authoritarian China has emerged, one not compliant with the standard “liberal democracy model” advocated by the West, it is seen as a threat. The “China threat” narrative is understandable, as people tend to fear something they do not understand or that looks different. And China today is a great “other,” but because it is strong, it is more threatening than a weak “other.” A strong China causes cognitive dissonance among many Western analysts because according to their theories, an authoritarian China should be weak. This explains the selective reading by Western scholars of China’s political reality

#### Predictions of CCP collapse are inherently biased

Kroeber 15 — Arthur Kroeber, Managing Director of GaveKal Dragonomics—an indepdendent global economic research firm, Editor of *China Economic Quarterly*, non-resident Senior Fwllow of the Brookings-Tsinghua Center, where his research focuses on China’s engagement with global economic institution, member of the National Committee on United States-China Relations, the Fernand Braudel Institute of International Economics, and the board of the Research Center for Chinese Politics and Business at Indiana University, 2015 (“When Will China’s Government Collapse?” *Foreign Policy*, March 13th, Available Online at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/13/china_communist_party_collapse_downfall/>, Accessed 6-22-16)

Predictions of Chinese political collapse have a long and futile history. Their persistent failure stems from a basic conceptual fault. Instead of facing the Chinese system on its own terms and understanding why it works — which could create insights into why it might stop working — critics judge the system against what they would like it to be, and find it wanting. This embeds an assumption of fragility that makes every societal problem look like an existential crisis. As a long-term resident of China, I would love the government to become more open, pluralistic and tolerant of creativity. That it refuses to do so is disappointing to me and many others, but offers no grounds for a judgment of its weakness

### Slow Growth helps CCP

#### Slower growth alleviates social tensions — that decreases likelihood of regime collapse

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In sum, in order to make the argument that an economic slowdown would lead to regime change, one would have to make the argument that all of the above factors would come into play. Yet, Shambaugh’s argument does not demonstrate this. Indeed, a slowing economy is actually bringing several benefits to China. A slower but stable growth rate would mean less pollution, fewer land-grabbing incidents, less corruption, less energy consumption, and lower socioeconomic expectations, all of which lead to reduced social tensions in China, decreasing the possibility of a regime collapse.

#### Rapid economic growth collapses the CPP — changing values, inequality, and corruption

Zeng 16 — Jinghan Zeng, Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Royal Holloway, University of London, Associate Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University of Warwick, Ph.D. in Politics and International Studies from the University of Warwick, M.A. from the University of Pittsburg, 2016 (“The Chinese Communist Party’s Capacity to Rule,” *Critical Studies of the Asia-Pacific,* Published by Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN 978-1-349-57455-1, p. 12)

In addition, many legitimacy problems are caused by rapid economic growth. Now, more than ever before, the CCP is concerned that economic performance might not be enough to provide sufficient legitimacy. The three most-perceived threats to legitimacy by Chinese intellectuals – changing values, socioeconomic inequality, and corruption – are all problems caused by economic growth. Take environmental pollution that is caused by rapid economic growth as another example. When Beijing’s smog becomes more visible and undermines the quality of life, people ever more concerned about the negative effects of economic growth. This negative perception of economic growth has no doubt undermined the positive impact of growth on legitimacy. Indeed, not only this domestic perception matters but so does the international perception of China’s growth. As mentioned, on the one hand, this economic growth can be perceived as a symbol of “a rising China” and a role model for developing countries. On the other hand, it can also be described as an immoral, costly growth model that violates human rights and sacrifices the poor and the environment. These two images of China certainly have contrary impacts on regime legitimacy.

### Alt Cause — Environment

#### Environmental destruction causes CCP collapse

Pei 13 - Margot Pritzker ’72 professor of government at Claremont McKenna College and a non-resident senior fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States.(Minxin Pei February 13, 2013 “5 Ways China Could Become a Democracy” <http://thediplomat.com/2013/02/5-ways-china-could-become-a-democracy/?allpages=yes>) RMT

“Environmental collapse” is our last regime change scenario. Given the salience of environmental decay in China these days, the probability of a regime change induced by environmental collapse is not trivial. The feed-back loop linking environmental collapse to regime change is complicated but not impossible to conceive. Obviously, the economic costs of environmental collapse will be substantial, in terms of healthcare, lost productivity, water shortage, and physical damages. Growth could stall, undermining the CCP’s legitimacy and control. Environmental collapse in China has already started to alienate the urban middle-class from the regime and triggered growing social protest. Environmental activism can become a political force linking different social groups together in a common cause against a one-party regime seen as insensitive, unresponsive, and incompetent on environmental issues. The severe degradation of the environment in China also means that the probability of a catastrophic environmental disaster – a massive toxic spill, record drought, or extended period of poisonous smog– could trigger a mass protest incident that opens the door for the rapid political mobilization of the opposition.

#### **Environmental degradation creates political mobilization — threatens CCP stability**

Nankivell 6 — Nathan Nankivell, Senior Researcher at the Office of the Special Advisor Policy, Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters, Canadian Department of National Defence, 2006 (China's Pollution and the Threat to Domestic and Regional Stability,” The Asian-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus, Volume 4, Issue 1, January 4th, available online at <http://apjjf.org/-Nathan-Nankivell/1799/article.html>, accessed 6/30/16) JL

China’s environment is edging closer to a condition of crisis with each passing day. Pollution and environmental degradation have already left scars and will continue to create problems as the situation worsens. While it may be possible for China to mitigate the impact of environmental damage through coordinated policies, effective spending, and sound future planning, Beijing is unable or unwilling to prescribe such measures. As an undeniable fact on the ground, it is imperative for prudent policymakers to consider the geostrategic implications of not just a superpower, but of an environmentally-ravaged China as well. There is little disagreement that China’s environment is a mounting problem for Beijing. The country produces as many sulphur emissions as Tokyo and Los Angeles combined but with only a fraction of the vehicles; China is home to 16 of the world’s 20 most polluted cities; water pollution affects as much as 70 percent of the country; air pollution is blamed for the premature death of some 400,000 Chinese annually; crop returns are steadily decreasing in quantity and quality because of polluted land and water; and solid waste production is expected to more than double over the next decade, pushing China far ahead of the U.S. as the largest producer (The Economist, August 19, 2004). While the general accessibility of this information is creating greater awareness, trends indicate that pollution and environmental degradation will worsen. Chinese consumers are expected to purchase hundreds of millions of automobiles, adding to air pollution problems. Despite pledges to put the environment first, national planners still aim to double per capita GDP by 2010 (China Daily, October 20, 2005). Urban populations are expected to continue expanding, leading to the creation of slums and stressing urban sanitation and delivery systems. Steadily richer Chinese will be able to purchase more goods and consume more resources. The nation lacks a powerful national body able to coordinate, monitor, and enforce environmental legislation: the State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) is under-staffed, has few resources, and must compete with other bureaucracies for attention. The devolution of decision-making to local levels has placed environmental stewardship in the hands of officials who are more concerned with economic growth than the environment. Finally, the deficiency of capital and the lack of will to promote massive spending on environmental repair necessary to reverse more than two decades of destruction are perhaps most indicative of the fact that environmental restoration will not occur: estimates on the final cost of environmental repair range into the tens of billions of dollars (Canadian Security Intelligence Services Division; The Economist, October 20, 2005). From the examples above, it is clear that China’s environmental crisis will only worsen before it gets better. SEPA’s impotence, Beijing’s contradictory policy statements, expanding consumption, and a lack of funds to reverse already serious problems all suggest that pollution and degradation will most likely worsen in the decades to come. Pollution, Unrest, and Social Mobilization As the impact of pollution on human health becomes more obvious and widespread, it is leading to greater political mobilization and social unrest from those citizens who suffer the most. The latest statement from the October 2005 Central Committee meeting in Shanghai illustrates Beijing’s increasing concern regarding the correlation between unrest and pollution issues. There were more than 74,000 incidents of protest and unrest recorded in China in 2004, up from 58,000 the year before (Asia Times, November 16, 2004). While there are no clear statistics linking this number of protests, riots, and unrest specifically to pollution issues, the fact that pollution was one of four social problems linked to disharmony by the Central Committee implies that there is at least the perception of a strong correlation. For the CCP and neighboring states, social unrest must be viewed as a primary security concern for three reasons: it is creating greater political mobilization, it threatens to forge linkages with democracy movements, and demonstrations are proving more difficult to contain. These three factors have the potential to challenge the CCP’s total political control, thus potentially destabilizing a state with a huge military arsenal and a history of violent, internal conflict that cannot be downplayed or ignored. Protests are uniting a variety of actors throughout local communities. Pollution issues are indiscriminate. The effects, though not equally felt by each person within a community, impact rich and poor, farmers and businessmen, families and individuals alike. As local communities respond to pollution issues through united opposition, it is leaving Beijing with no easy target upon which to blame unrest, and no simple option for how to quell whole communities with a common grievance. Moreover, protests serve as a venue for the politically disaffected who are unhappy with the current state of governance, and may be open to considering alternative forms of political rule. Environmental experts like Elizabeth Economy note that protests afford an opportunity for the environmental movement to forge linkages with democracy advocates. She notes in her book, The River Runs Black, that several environmentalists argue that change is only possible through greater democratization and notes that the environmental and democracy movements united in Eastern Europe prior to the end of the Cold War. It is conceivable that in this way, environmentally-motivated protests might help to spread democracy and undermine CCP rule. A further key challenge is trying to contain protests once they begin. The steady introduction of new media like cell phones, email, and text messaging are preventing China’s authorities from silencing and hiding unrest. Moreover, the ability to send and receive information ensures that domestic and international observers will be made aware of unrest, making it far more difficult for local authorities to employ state-sanctioned force. The security ramifications of greater social unrest cannot be overlooked. Linkages between environmental and democracy advocates potentially challenge the Party’s monolithic control of power. In the past, similar challenges by Falun Gong and the Tiananmen protestors have been met by force and detainment. In an extreme situation, such as national water shortages, social unrest could generate widespread, coordinated action and political mobilization that would serve as a midwife to anti-CCP political challenges, create divisions within the Party over how to deal with the environment, or lead to a massive show of force. Any of these outcomes would mark an erosion or alteration to the CCP’s current power dynamic. And while many would treat political change in China, especially the implosion of the Party, as a welcome development, it must be noted that any slippage of the Party’s dominance would most likely be accompanied by a period of transitional violence. Though most violence would be directed toward dissident Chinese, a ripple effect would be felt in neighboring states through immigration, impediments to trade, and an increased military presence along the Chinese border. All of these situations would alter security assumptions in the region. Other Security Concerns While unrest presents the most obvious example of a security threat related to pollution, several other key concerns are worth noting. The cost of environmental destruction could, for example, begin to reverse the blistering rate of economic growth in China that is the foundation of CCP legitimacy. Estimates maintain that 7 percent annual growth is required to preserve social stability. Yet the costs of pollution are already taxing the economy between 8 and 12 percent of GDP per year [1]. As environmental problems mount, this percentage will increase, in turn reducing annual growth. As a result, the CCP could be seriously challenged to legitimize its continued control if economic growth stagnates. Nationalists in surrounding states could use pollution as a rallying point to muster support for anti-Chinese causes. For example, attacks on China’s environmental management for its impact on surrounding states like Japan, could be used to argue against further investment in the country or be highlighted during territorial disputes in the East China Sea to agitate anti-Chinese sentiment. While nationalism does not imply conflict, it could reduce patterns of cooperation in the region and hopes for balanced and effective multilateral institutions and dialogues. Finally, China’s seemingly insatiable appetite for timber and other resources, such as fish, are fuelling illegal exports from nations like Myanmar and Indonesia. As these states continue to deplete key resources, they too will face problems in the years to come and hence the impact on third nations must be considered. Territorial Expansion or Newfound Alliances In addition to the concerns already mentioned, pollution, if linked to a specific issue like water shortage, could have important geopolitical ramifications. China’s northern plains, home to hundreds of millions, face acute water shortages. Growing demand, a decade of drought, inefficient delivery methods, and increasing water pollution have reduced per capita water holdings to critical levels. Although Beijing hopes to relieve some of the pressures via the North-South Water Diversion project, it requires tens of billions of dollars and its completion is, at best, still several years away and, at worst, impossible. Yet just to the north lies one of the most under-populated areas in Asia, the Russian Far East. While there is little agreement among scholars about whether resource shortages lead to greater cooperation or conflict, either scenario encompasses security considerations. Russian politicians already allege possible Chinese territorial designs on the region. They note Russia’s falling population in the Far East, currently estimated at some 6 to 7 million, and argue that the growing Chinese population along the border, more than 80 million, may soon take over. While these concerns smack of inflated nationalism and scare tactics, there could be some truth to them. The method by which China might annex the territory can only be speculated upon, but would surely result in full-scale war between two powerful, nuclear-equipped nations. While a significant concern, the larger and more realistic implication for Western security analysts must be greater cooperation and a possible alliance with Moscow. It should be assumed that China will court Russia or even pursue an alliance with its northern neighbor to gain access to water, oil, and other natural resources. Indicative of growing strategic cooperation include a number of recent developments between the two countries, including a joint military exercise and continued investment and work on an oil pipeline. Such warming ties between Moscow and Beijing could threaten Western interests in the region and beyond. Conclusion Pollution and environmental degradation, not traditionally considered security concerns, should be accounted for in security assessments of China and the region. Social unrest, the potential for large-scale political mobilization, and democratization are increasingly challenging CCP power and legitimacy. These trends, when linked to political change, could lead to outbreaks of violence, possible large-scale emigration, economic instability, and other concerns. In facing such a serious problem, China would benefit from further foreign assistance and expertise. As the health of China and its economy is inextricably linked to all of the world’s most developed economies, wealthy states and NGOs should consider additional courses of action to help China form a credible environmental movement supported by legal experts, academics and Party officials sympathetic to change. Although not a complete solution, increased foreign assistance may be a step in the right direction. Alternatively, and if left untreated, China’s environment will worsen and threaten stability in one of the most populated and dynamic areas on Earth.

### Alt Cause — Government Repression

#### Xi’s repression cultivates dissent — destabilizes the CCP and creates support for democracy

Bandow 15 — Doug Bandow, senior fellow at the Cato Institute, specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties, worked as special assistant to President Ronald Reagan and editor of the political magazine Inquiry, writes for Fortune magazine, National Interest, the Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Times, JD from Stanford University, 2015 (“Chinese Repression Threatens Economic Dynamism and Political Stability,” CATO Research Institute, July 27th, available online at <http://www.cato.org/blog/chinese-repression-threatens-economic-dynamism-political-stability>, accessed 6/29/16) JL

Increasingly globalized Chinese are aware of their online disadvantage compared to their peers in the West. Google, YouTube, and Twitter are verboten. Today Bloomberg and the New York Times are beyond reach. Last week as BBC television began to detail official abuses my TV went black. A couple minutes later BBC was back, after the China report had finished. While internet and media restrictions have not prevented rapid economic growth, barring the PRC’s best and brightest to a world of information is likely to dampen innovation and entrepreneurship. Moreover, those denied their full freedoms are more likely to leave home. Many of China’s wealthiest citizens have been departing an authoritarian system unbounded by the rule of law. Repression also stultifies China’s political evolution to a more mature and stable political order. Democracy provides an important safety valve for popular dissent. The Chinese Communist Party’s control may not be as firm as often presumed. The oppressive establishment which most Chinese have faced for most of their lives is Communist. Indeed, for many if not most party members, Communism is a means of personal advancement, even enrichment. President Xi Jinping’s anti-corruption campaign is popular, but is widely seen as politically motivated. Moreover, Xi has abrogated the well-understood “deal” of the last four decades, that rulers can retire and be immune from future prosecution. Will incumbents so readily yield power in the future? Perhaps even more threatening for the CCP is the potential for an economic slowdown and consequent political unrest. Already protests are common against local governments, which tend to be ostentatiously rapacious. What if that antagonism shifts against the center? A poorer PRC means a poorer world: China is a major supplier and increasingly important source of global demand. A politically unstable Beijing would have unpredictable effects on its neighbors. As I wrote for Forbes online: “Since Mao’s death in 1976, the PRC has changed dramatically—and dramatically for the better. But this second revolution has stalled. Economic liberalization remains incomplete. Political reform never started. Individual liberty has regressed.” The Chinese people deserve to be free. The Chinese nation would benefit from their freedom. The rest of the world would gain from a freer Chinese nation. Everyone desiring a peaceful and prosperous 21st century should hope for the successful conclusion of China’s second revolution.